

Meeting Notes

Brownfield Redevelopment Task Force
May 18, 2006

Attended:

Larry Bryant- ADEM
Andrew Murr- Barge Waggoner Sumner & Cannon
Paul Kennedy- USDA/NRCS
Charles Cowen- Birmingham Ind. Living Center
Jim DeLano- MACTEC
Nigel Roberts- City of Fairfield
Louis Montgomery- BHATE Environmental
Preston Huddleston-Metropolitan Development Board
Whyard Dykes- BHATE Environmental
Chad Williamson- Caswill Group
L'Tryce Slade- Slade Planning
Eph Mazer- Mazer Real Estate
Keith Strother- City of Birmingham
Laura Sanders- Auburn University- School of Architecture
Bob Wilkerson- RPCGB

Opening Comments:

Bob Wilkerson opened the meeting and made the following remarks:

- Last Friday was a great day for Brownfield Redevelopment in Alabama: A Formal awards ceremony was sponsored by EPA Region 4 in Tarrant on the site of the Former Vulcan Rivet & Bolt. Task Force member Mayor Loxcile Tuck was the official host of the Grant Awards Announcement Event. Awardees include: The City of Tarrant, The City of Selma, and The City of Tuscaloosa. Each was awarded a grant in the amount of \$200,000.00.
- It was noted that all communities awarded grants for the 2006 cycle represented resubmissions of applications made in 2005, indicating that persistence and refinement of applications often results in award of grant funds.
- The Brownfield Redevelopment Task Force was credited as a partner and participant in Tarrant's successful application. Specifically, the Task Force's role in bringing Auburn University Architecture Students to the table, resulting in fresh vision and potential site reuse plans was sited as a strong component contributing to the award. That point was later echoed by Jymalyn Redmond who participated in the authoring of the grant application.

Wilkerson Introduced **Laura Sanders** of Auburn University's School of Architecture, Master of Landscape Architecture Program. Laura presented a program on Auburn University's focus on Brownfield Redevelopment Titled: **Problem Solving through Design**

Sanders defined Auburn's commitment for engaging students in communities all across the state focusing on Brownfields, Watersheds, and other challenging landscapes that encompass opportunities for ecological improvements. This provides students with valuable learning experiences while engaging actual sites, and contact with clients and stakeholders to solve real world problems. Communities gain the advantage of Auburn's outreach through avant garde solutions that improve both the environment and quality of life. Under the leadership of Landscape Professor Charlene LeBleu the presentation provided details of student outreach work in the following communities:

Tarrant: The Vulcan Rivet & Bolt Design Charette conducted in March 2005 as a Task Force sponsored initiative. Sanders carried the audience through the process and outcomes of the charette, and its visioning impact upon potential reuse plans for the site, and a broader impact upon the City's leadership in visioning similar redevelopment potentials in tandem with an ongoing revitalization plan for Tarrant.

Brookside: Brookside Scenic Park

This project impacting the greater Five Mile Creek initiative involves mitigation of severe stormwater and flooding concerns, repair of the creek's riparian buffers, protection of wildlife and habitat, and greenway intervention for human access and recreational purposes along the creek.

Phoenix City, Valley, and Columbus, Ga.: Chattahoochee Dam Removal

This project has engaged a substantial amount of outreach effort, resulting in visions for riverfront access and restoration, bioremediation and constructed wetlands, and town center improvements. The Nature Conservancy's Chattahoochee Fall Line Project is interested in assisting with and facilitating the restoration of the riparian and shoal vegetation in the project corridor and associated public outreach intended to raise awareness of the region's natural heritage.

Calhoun County: Landfill Reclamation

A summer studio project under Professor Charlene LeBleu; students from programs in Landscape Architecture, Building Science, and Planning will collaborate to address all aspects of landfill reclamation. In addition, an external collaboration with the Task Force will result in an Alabama Toolkit addressing specific Brownfield redevelopment needs of our state. This will serve as an enhancement of the Task Force's recently adopted Southeastern Toolkit, developed by ICMA and EPA Region 4.

Valley, Al: The Langdale Mill Brownfield Site:

During the summer and fall, 2006, students under the guidance of Professor Charlene LeBleu in collaboration with the Brownfield Task Force, MACTEC Engineering, EPA Region 4, ADEM, and The City of Valley- will partner to vision, design, and make ready

for implementation a site redevelopment plan for the Mill property. The lessons learned including: challenges, solutions, processes and suggestions for reuse have been accepted by *The American Society of Landscape Architecture National Conference* as a complete panel presentation at the October conference. The presentation has also been submitted to the program committee for Brownfields 2006.

NOTE: A PDF of the PowerPoint has been placed on the brownfield Task Force website: www.rpcgb.org

A roundtable Q&A discussion followed. Several Task Force Members provided valuable suggestions to expand the outreach and inquired about the possibility for providing additional opportunities for student projects.

Sanders explained the educational and learning experience value and motivation of opportunities to engage in real world sites, recounting her experiences with the Vulcan Rivet & Bolt site.

Wilkerson explained from his personal experience as a graduate of the program opportunities for enticing and engaging thesis students, providing those students with sites, resources, contacts, data, history and others components necessary for a credible thesis study. Wilkerson also mentioned the need for summer job opportunities, which would have certain caveats that would need to be discussed with professor LeBleu.

Wilkerson and Sanders agreed to discuss the interest with Professor LeBleu and possible development of a conduit for communicating requests.

The meeting was adjourned with announcement that the next meeting is set for June 15th (1:30 PM). The speaker is Angela Till of the Alabama Department of Revenue to discuss the Alabama Brownfield Tax Abatement Legislation, and potential impact on The Voluntary Clean-up Program.